

DeSoto County Contacts – Weather Related Emergencies

May 23, 2013, Hernando, Ms. – The DeSoto County Board of Supervisors held a press conference today in a concerted effort to inform county citizens on how to report damage caused by the recent storms and consequent flooding.

Yesterday, in the County board meeting, EMS requested two declarations from the Board of Supervisors; one to declare an emergency in DeSoto County to the State of Mississippi and one to ask the State of Mississippi to ask the Governor for help from the Federal Government or FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Association.) Both were filed by 9am with State authorities.

It was reported by the National Weather Service that in a 24-hour period, from 7pm Tuesday evening to 8am Wednesday morning, DeSoto County experienced an average of 4.3 inches of rain. However, several individuals reported anywhere from 5.6 – 7.9 inches on their weather gages throughout the county; a report undisputed by local and national authorities.

Volunteer search and rescue personnel and firemen trained in damage assessment were out yesterday and again today to assess reported damage to personal property and will continue to do so until all property has been visited.

DeSoto County EMS has been in touch with the major municipalities and MEMA (Mississippi Emergency Management Association) representatives to help coordinate the damage assessment effort throughout the county.

As of 7pm last night, the county and cities reported nearly 80 homes had reported some kind of weather related damage. Approximately 15 businesses had also reported damage; some major and some minor.

If you have experienced damage due to the recent flooding, please call the number that best suits your situation. Additionally, please remember to call 911 if you have an immediate or eminent emergency. These numbers are to report damage and get an assessment after any threat has dissipated.

Desoto County: 662-469-8016 (Emergency Management Services) or
email: weather_damage_reports@desotocountymiss.gov

Hernando: 662-429-9092 (Julie Harris, mayor's office)

Horn Lake: 662-781-1157 ext. 2 or 3 (City/Fire Department Emergency Management)

Southaven: 662-393-7466 (Fire Department Administration)

Olive Branch: 662-892-9201 (Mayor's Office)

Walls: Call the county number 662-469-8016

In the press conference today, Mark Gardner, District 2 supervisor reflected on the recent weather.

“The weather we experienced on Tuesday was the tail end of what the folks in Oklahoma got; fortunately, with not as much wind.”

He went on to say the Red Cross has assisted several folks needing emergency shelter due to the damage to their homes and that the County EMS folks had spent the past 2 ½ days assessing the damage, documenting it for the state of emergency.

“It’s up to the FEMA to decide how long it will be if or when the county receives assistance, continued Gardner. “This is not a big event to them, but it is to us.”

“There are many variables to consider when assessing storm related damage,” added Bobby Storey director of DeSoto County EMS. “What kind of damage was done? Livestock, cars, homes? It’s all plays a part in the equation.”

When asked when the last time the County experienced this much rain and damage, Storey could not recall; but he did add the event seemed concentrated more to the central and west side of the county and there were numerous road closings throughout the storms peak.

“The water came in so fast,” added Lee Caldwell, District 4 supervisor. “Roads flooded, then subsided and the surge moved onward, causing more road closures down the way. Some residents told me they had never seen flooding like this in over 35 years.”

“Chief Storey’s people responded quickly and efficiently,” concluded Gardner. They should be commended for their efforts.”

“And the great citizens of DeSoto County did as well,” added Caldwell. They assisted their neighbors when needed and stayed out of the way when necessary.”